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MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

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THE MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE title of this book speaks for itself. My purpose in this book is to deal with Marriage exclusively as a Divine Mystery. It is as a Divine Mystery that it excites the hatred of the world, the flesh, and the devil, the avowed enemies of GOD. It is to this hatred of the Mystery that, par excellence, witnesses in an unbelieving world of Christ and His Church, that is to be attributed the attack that is so persistently being made, in one form or another, upon the Sanctity of Marriage.

All attacks upon Holy Marriage spring out of rebellion against, or ignorance respecting, the fact of the Incarnation. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD." The "children of this world" vent their hatred of Jesus Christ upon the Mystery that so preeminently witnesses to Him. So it comes to pass that the Mystery of Holy Marriage lies

slain in the streets of the great city wherein also our Lord was crucified: and the children of this world rejoice because, as they think, they have got rid of the Witness that tormented them.

It is therefore of the supremest importance that, in the evil days in which the Majesty of GOD is being flouted and insulted in this His Divine Mystery, Christians should strengthen themselves in their appreciation of the Revelation of GOD. Thus they will (*a*) be prepared to meet all so-called "difficulties" in respect of Holy Marriage; and (*b*) cease to wonder at the bitter hostility of the world to that Divine Mystery.

HENRY P. DENISON.

ST. MICHAEL'S,
N. KENSINGTON,
September, 1916.

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THE MYSTERY OF MARRIAGE

CHAPTER I

ON MYSTERIES

MEN are impatient of mysteries. They like, as far as possible, to eliminate the mysterious from out of life. They wish life to be a plain, simple, matter-of-fact sort of thing: something about which they know all that is to be known, or that is worth knowing; or, to put it in another way, they have a lurking idea that what men in general do not know is not worth knowing. They are, in a word, impatient of Mystery.

But what does this mean? It means, of course, as we see directly we stop to think about it, that they are content to live on the surface of

things. They are, spiritually and morally, opportunists. They would not in so many words say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." That is not the fashionable word of modern Epicureanism. We should express ourselves somewhat differently in the twentieth century. Our cry would rather be, "Let us fill up our time with ceaseless activities, let us engross ourselves in the politics of the day; let our lightest pastime be to play with religious or philosophical systems." But the end of the cry will be the same, "for to-morrow we die." It is always the short span of life between the cradle and the grave that seems to fill the stage of actual realities. Once let men's thoughts travel back behind their birth, or forwards beyond their grave, and you are in the region of mystery, which, to the prosaic matter-of-fact mind of the man of to-day, is synonymous with unreality.

"But," a man may say, "you are not putting it fairly. We do not say that there is nothing beyond those things of which we take cognizance by our senses. What we say is that we cannot know these things; and therefore we had better

confine ourselves to what we do know." Exactly so! But that is implied in the formula, "for to-morrow we die." The Agnostic argument comes to much the same thing as the Epicurean. They will do what they can with phenomena without troubling themselves about those things of which they are the phenomena. "Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds, ere they fade." The rosebuds may be purely sensual, they may be the rosebuds of feverish energy, or the rosebuds of intellectual speculation. The argument in either case is one and the same.

Now the blot on this system is that it is so hopelessly unintelligent. How can men deal intelligently with an effect if they scorn to know, or think that they cannot know, anything about its cause? If the phenomenon is unintelligible, we can do nothing with it but watch it helplessly. Common sense might warn us not to meddle at all with what we do not, or cannot, understand. If we know nothing of the meaning of a phenomenon we are bound to make hideous mistakes if we attempt in any way to deal with it. A young man who had parted company with the faith, said to an old Priest

that he could have nothing to do with a "mystical religion." The obvious answer was that the said young man did not seem to see anything mysterious about Creation. Is not this just the argument of the Book of Job? Job was puzzled at the Mystery of the Passion that hung over him. He could not see why the righteous, being undoubtedly righteous, should suffer as he was suffering. The answer of GOD pointed him back to the mystery of Creation. He found no difficulty in accepting that at the Hands of GOD; why, then, should he find any difficulty in accepting the other at the same Hands? Our very existence is a standing mystery; the existence of the Universe itself is a standing mystery. The one and only question is whether we have a sufficient knowledge of the underlying mystery of which the Universe is a phenomenon to enable us to deal in any way with that phenomenon. If we have, then it is abundantly clear that we must deal with the phenomenon solely with respect to that of which it is a manifestation. If we have no knowledge of the underlying mystery, then we must be just apathetic, and leave the phenomenon severely alone;

otherwise we shall write ourselves down as the fools who rush in where angels fear to tread.

We find a tendency among men, to draw lines of demarcation across life and to distinguish sharply between what they call "things religious" and what they are pleased to call "things secular." This is partly the cause, and partly the effect of the temper of mind, that makes men, in one way or another, content to live merely on the surface of things. These lines are purely arbitrary and grossly unintelligent. The difficulty is not, as men profess to think, about "things religious." *The real difficulty is as to where they are to find their "things secular"!* Where in the sphere of GOD'S Creation are men to find anything that is independent of religion? Ah! that is the point! There are no things that can properly be termed "things secular." To get at such things, you must get outside of the sphere of Creation. And that is just sheerly impossible! How hopelessly silly it is to talk about "things religious" and "things secular." One comes across foolish people who have somehow got despondent over what they are pleased to call their "religion": and one knows so well

the weak, pitiful whine with which they say, "I think I must give it all up." One makes an effort to bring these people to their senses by asking what it is that they think they must give up: one asks them whether they meant to "give up" having been created by GOD; and one chuckles as one asks oneself how they propose to set about it! What a queer thing that must be that they have called their "religion"! And how far queerer must be that "purely secular" thing in which they are thinking of finding a refuge! How can people be so utterly stupid as to talk about "things religious" and "things secular"!

To return to our point. Either we do know enough about the underlying mysteries to enable us to deal with the phenomena of life, or we must just dully look on at them in helpless stupidity. Which is it? Let us try and see.

The mists roll away as we hear the Divine word, "Let us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness." And as, with GOD, will and action are identical, there follow the glorious words, "So GOD created man in His Own Image:

in the Image of GOD created He him." Unlike the brute creation we can reason and think. Like GOD we can reflect upon ourselves. We stand erect in the blinding light of the Truth; we have "the knowledge of mysteries"! Let the beasts of the field, the Epicureans, the Agnostics, *et hoc genus omne*, eat and drink because to-morrow they die; let the human beasts live their miserable life on the surface of things content to peddle about with their banquets and rosebuds, their feverish activities and their child's play with "systems." Shall we honour them? No! They have cast away the glorious prerogative of man! "GOD created man in His Own Image: in the Image of GOD created He him." Therefore men who are not utterly unworthy of the name have that knowledge of mysteries that will enable them to deal with the phenomena that are but the manifestation of these mysteries! They will recognize these phenomena as being simply such manifestation, and will joy and glory in them as such. For them, created in the Image of GOD, there will be no "things secular." They leave that sort of thing to the Epicurean, *et hoc genus omne*.

How have men come to sink so low? The answer is clear: they have been deceived into thinking that they can be independent of GOD. They have been deceived, that is to say, with thinking that they can deal with phenomena as if they were not phenomena; and they have been deceived into thinking that they can deal with an effect as if it were something else than the result of a cause! But He Who created them has ransomed them from the power of that grave of merely bestial life; and, in His New Creation, He says to them, "Ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." And triumphantly there rings out the Christian maxim "Who is a liar but he that believeth not that JESUS is the Christ? This is a liar and an Antichrist." *A liar* because he is an *Antichrist.*

How significant for us in this connection is the promise of our Lord, "He that believeth in Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The *light* of life! Not its puzzles, or its problems, or its illusions, but its *light.* We are not used to think of light in connection with everyday life; to us it seems as

if the world to come were going to be in sharpest contrast to all that we have hitherto known. But this is because we *will* live on the surface of things. "The path of the just," we are told, "is like a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." It is not that we sit in darkness, and that one day light will spring upon us. We stand already, through the mercy of our Lord, in the light of life. Light is a necessity of life. Life in utter darkness is merely existence; we can do nothing with it. Thus it is said so truly of the Gentiles that they were "sitting" in darkness. It is all they can do: they cannot move and act. And it is noted in the plague of darkness that none of the Egyptians rose from their place. Where the darkness overtook them, there they must lay until it is removed. When our Lord restores us to the knowledge of mysteries by renewing in us the Image and Likeness of Himself, He says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

We have seen that without a knowledge of its underlying mysteries we can do nothing with Creation, but just watch it apathetically: and

that if we do attempt in any way to meddle with phenomena of which we do not know the meaning, we are bound to make hideous mistakes. But when we emerge into the "light of life" we can go bravely and surely forward, able to deal with the phenomena because we know of what they are the manifestation. How wonderful life has become when we see, for instance, that each little weed, growing unheeded by the wayside, represents something in the Eternal Word! How simply did Azarias and his companions break into their glorious song in the burning fiery furnace! It was all plain and simple to them. They were walking, as they always had walked, in the light of life!

Now we, when we speak of "mystery," generally associate it with darkness. But the truth of the matter is that mysteries are the real light. Those who have long been sitting in darkness, cannot bear the light and cannot see when suddenly brought into it. Like Paul of Tarsus, they cannot see for the brightness of the light. But it is characteristic of those who have been born again of water and of the Spirit that they

are no longer of the night or of the darkness, but that they are all the children of the light and of the day. In their knowledge of the mysteries that underlie the phenomena of Creation, they walk in the light of life. The knowledge of mysteries is the very atmosphere of light. The children of this world need a change of mind. "Repent ye," cry St. John Baptist and our Lord, "for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The Greek word "μετάνοια," which we translate into "repentance," means a *change of mind*. It is akin to that other word "conversion," which implies a complete turning round, so that men face exactly the opposite way to that which they faced before. To the unregenerate it is the things that they can immediately see and discern that seem to be in the light. The mysteries that lie behind and before are, to them, darkness. Whereas of course the truth is the exact contrary of this. Apart from the knowledge of the underlying mysteries, the facts of everyday life are hopelessly dark. "GOD is Light: and in Him is no darkness at all." Therefore, until we can see everything simply in the relation in which it stands to GOD, we are

sitting in darkness, because we are sitting in the shadow of death.

The relation in which it stands to God is the simple truth as to all created being. And is it not of the simplicity of connecting habitually every phenomenon with that of which it is a manifestation that our Lord is speaking when He says, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light"? It is just this transparent simplicity that attracts men, in spite of themselves, in the True Religion. The attraction of the lives of the Saints is surely that here we have life brought back to its simplest term. Seen merely on the surface, life is full of complications. To those who have an aversion to mystery it must always be so. But once bring the phenomenon back to its source, and the effect to its cause, and all is simple; because all resolves itself at last in the Unity of GOD.

It is not the intention of this book to deal with Holy Marriage from the practical point of view, except quite incidentally. Our object is to find our way back to the underlying mysteries of which the Institution of Holy Marriage is the outcome and result; for, if our eye in this

matter be single, our whole body will be full of light. If we accustom ourselves to look at Holy Marriage as a whole, instead of merely considering it on the surface, the difficulties and complications with which it seems to bristle will disappear; and, as we view it in its absolute simplicity, and trace it to its root in the inner Life of God, we shall be filled with that holy fear that is the very fountain of joy; we shall put off our shoes from off our feet because we shall know that the place whereon we stand is holy ground.

CHAPTER II

THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

WE will begin our consideration of the Mystery of Marriage at the point of its first appearance; and from the phenomenon we will work our way back to the underlying mystery in which it is rooted.

We note, first, that Holy Marriage was instituted in the time of man's innocency. How wonderful it is to realize that there are two things now with us in everyday life that go behind the first appearance of sin in the world. One, of course, is Marriage; and the other the Sacrament of Eternal Life. Let us for a moment consider the significance of this great fact. It does speak to us of the parenthetical nature of evil. Here is something that was there before sin had "entered" into the world! The world was there, Grace was there, Holy Marriage was

there; all these things were there already. When sin "entered in" it found these things already in possession. We do need to be reminded of the transitoriness of evil. It "entered in" to something that was there before it: and it will be completely and utterly cast out. It had a beginning and it must have an end. For the first Article of our Creed tells us that GOD is Almighty. There is no "principle" of evil eternally standing over against GOD: nor can opposition to GOD maintain itself in the long run. To those who live merely on the surface of things, evil seems to be an inevitable factor in Creation; but those who walk in "the light of life" go back to the time before evil had "entered into the world." It has been noticed that evil is like the parenthesis in a sentence. Take away the parenthesis and the sentence stands. So is evil in the world. When it has gone Creation returns to its normal relation to GOD. And Holy Marriage (for this is our point) lies behind the entrance of evil into the world. It was "instituted in the time of man's innocency."

When GOD breathed into man's nostrils the

breath of life, we are told that man became a living soul. It may quite well be that there were human animals before this. But be this as it may, it was of man as become a living soul that GOD said, "It is not good for the man that he should be alone." But for this living soul there was not found an helpmeet for him. So woman was formed of the very substance of man; and it is out of this particular fact that the Institution of Holy Marriage arose. "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. *For this cause* shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife: and they two shall be one flesh." So then the original Institution of Marriage rested on the particular manner of the Creation of Eve; not the female human animal, but the woman of the living soul. And this mystery was of spotless purity, and was not tainted with any sense of shame. It is not perhaps too much to say that the Institution of Holy Marriage was the culminating point of the Creation. And, that being so, we are not surprised to find that it was just here that the

blighting influence of sin fell. The immediate result of the fall was the introduction of a sense of shame for which, in the state of original righteousness, no place had been found.

Now put these various facts together and you will see at once that Holy Marriage holds a very prominent place in the Creation. It points back to something behind itself. In other words, it is itself a manifestation of deep mysteries. The special manner of the creation of Eve cannot be detached from its context. It was not the result of a sudden impulse: it could not be of the nature of an afterthought. It was the effect of a deep cause. We shall consider later on what that was that caused the special manner of the creation of Eve. Meanwhile we will confine ourselves for the moment to that Institution of Marriage, in the time of man's innocency, that was the immediate result of the creation of Eve.

From the conception of Marriage, instituted by GOD in the time of man's innocency, we eliminate all trace of anything of the nature of impurity. We exclude from it all idea of mere animal passion, everything that carries with

it any sense of shame. That is the outcome of the fall; the outcome, that is to say, of the attempt of living souls to be in any sense independent of GOD; the attempt, let us say once more, to deal with phenomena without reference to that of which they are the manifestation; the attempt to deal with effects without reference to their cause. It was this attempt that first brought any element of shame into the relation between man and woman. Eliminating, then, everything of the nature of shame from GOD'S blessed Institution in the time of man's innocency, we see, in the primeval institution of marriage, the manifestation of two great mysteries: (*a*) the Mystery of Love; and (*b*) the Mystery of Unity.

What exactly do we mean when we speak of Love? We feel instinctively that it is the highest thing of which we are capable. It is stronger than death. "Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it." It is a priceless treasure. "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." To be without it is to have lost the Image and Likeness of GOD.

"He that loveth not knoweth not GOD; for GOD is Love." Love is strong, love is priceless, love is divine. But in what does love consist? How shall we define it? Is it not so that it is of the very essence of love that it should be the desire to give? How hard it is for fallen man to grasp the simple truth as enunciated by our Lord that it is more blessed to give than to receive! In the inherent selfishness of our fallen nature we are always wanting to receive. It seems so incomprehensible to us that the *raison d'être* of our existence should be that we might give it. We can see how magnificent this ideal is: unselfish, self-sacrificing, chivalrous love always makes its appeal; there is something so splendid about it that it stirs our inmost heart and calls forth our unstinted praise. But we are conscious how far we ourselves are from personally realizing that the real end of life is that it may be given.

Now the summit of love on this earthly plane is reached in the love of man for woman, and of woman for man. Wonderful is the love of devoted friendship; deeper and more wonderful still is the love of the parent for the child;

but most wonderful of all is the love that leads to, and is consummated in, Holy Marriage. It is the desire of each to live solely for the other; it is the desire of each to give itself unreservedly to the other. To be "in love" is to be under the dominion of an all-devouring passion, the noblest and highest passion of which our nature is capable. Such love passes all limit of cold, prudent calculation; the lover will fling all considerations to the winds for his love: "if a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would utterly be contemned."

In our fallen condition it is perhaps inevitable that our lower nature should drag us somewhat down even at the culminating point of true love. But marriage was instituted in the time of man's innocency: and as we find it there the love of marriage is the pure unadulterated desire of each simply to give. It is the very Image and Likeness of GOD, because he that loveth not knoweth not GOD; for GOD is Love. So, behind the Institution of Marriage in the time of man's innocency lies the Mystery of the living soul created in the Image and Likeness of GOD. And behind the Image and Like-

ness lies the Life of Him Whose Image and Likeness it is. We shall revert to this later on. For the moment we are concerned only with the Institution of Marriage in the time of man's innocency. We see that the Mystery of Love is enshrined in the Institution of Marriage.

And along with the Mystery of Love goes the Mystery of Unity. We can perhaps separate these two things in thought; but in reality they are one and the same. Now it is the Mystery of Unity that is put in the forefront of Holy Marriage, both in its original Institution, in the time of man's innocency, and in the re-affirmation of that Institution in the New Creation. What marks off Holy Marriage from everything else is that, in it, the man and his wife are "no more two, but one flesh." And St. Paul here appends the remark, "This is a great mystery."

We note here that it is just in the scornful disregard of this great mystery, as constituting the essence of Marriage, that all perversion and degradation of Holy Marriage lies. We, alas! find this notably in our own day. First, we have the flippant rebellion against the law of the

Church in the Table of Forbidden Degrees; and, secondly, we have the light-hearted revolt against the indissolubitity of Marriage. In each case it is the ignoring of the "great mystery" of Unity that makes revolt possible. The Table of Forbidden Degrees rests on a principle. What is that principle? It is that a man's relations by marriage are, in this respect, as his relations by blood. We are not, at the moment, concerned with the question as to whether this is right or wrong. We are simply concerned with the patent fact that (rightly or wrongly) the Table is built on this principle. According to the Table, where marriage is impossible through kindred, it is also impossible through affinity; and where, through distance of kindred it becomes possible, there it also becomes possible in affinity. Now we may apply to the Table the Divine maxim as regards the Commandments, "If a man keep the whole Law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Of course he is! because in that one point he is setting his will against the Will of God. It really does not matter which of the Commandments it is that a man makes up his mind to

break. The Law of GOD is one solid whole. If you break it, you break it. *How* you elect to break it is quite a matter of insignificance. It may be the fourth Commandment, or it may be the seventh or the eighth. There is not a pin to choose between them. So it is with the Table of Forbidden Degrees. If an exception is to be made in the case of one forbidden degree, the principle on which all the other degrees of affinity rest is trampled under foot and set at naught. If conceivably a man might marry his sister-in-law there is nothing but sentiment that can stand in the way of his marrying any other of his wife's relations. The man who thinks he can do this has parted company with the whole principle on which the Table is based. It is, one might hope, needless to say that the legalizing of a certain union has nothing whatever to do with its being right. It may be legalized wrong, but all the Parliaments in the world cannot make it right. Just in passing we may note the deep significance that underlies our common English expression "in law." A brother "in law," or a sister "in law"! In what "law"? In the "law" of GOD. It is

indeed an evil day when human "law" sets itself in flat opposition to "The Law." The whole Table of Forbidden Degrees is true to the "great mystery," viz., that a man and his wife are no more two, but one flesh. Those who quarrel with the Table do so because they have lost sight of the great Mystery of Unity, which is the very essence of Holy Marriage as instituted in the time of man's innocency, and are dealing with it as if it were merely a human institution.

So, too, with the other fact about Holy Marriage that is being loudly and notoriously called in question at the present, viz., its indissolubility. We are not going to concern ourselves with the many arguments by which men seek to bolster up Divorce. We need not remind ourselves that, for the mere safety of Society, men are beginning to see that Divorce, even from the worldly point of view, is a dangerous weapon. We need not drag ourselves through the garbage and filth of the Divorce Court; we need not think of the horrors of collusion. We simply say that Divorce within the meaning of the Act (i.e. with freedom to marry again) is

an impossiblity from the very nature of the case. It is impossible *because of the Mystery of Unity*. A man may say—many men do say—that they do not believe in the Mystery of Unity in Marriage. Be it so! We simply say that such people have, *pro tanto*, parted company with the Christian Religion. The Israelite may, if he wishes to do so, go back to the bondage of Egypt; the living soul may, if he wishes to do so, return to the state of the human animal. But, according to the primeval Institution of Holy Marriage, Divorce (within the meaning of the Divine Act) is impossible, because enshrined within the original Institution of Marriage is the Mystery of Unity.

Again, may we not say that there is a good deal of scornful disregard of the Mystery of Unity to be found underlying the movement for what are called "Women's Rights"? Pushed as the movement is to extremes, it seems to aim at placing woman exactly on all fours with man. But this savours of federation rather than of unity; and one feels that in this passionate struggle for a place of exact equality with man, the original Institution of Holy Marriage

has been ignored, and the creation of Eve, out of which that Institution sprang, has been forgotten.

We find, then, the Mystery of Unity set in the forefront of GOD's Institution of Holy Marriage. And in this we find once more, behind the Mystery of Marriage, the mystery of man created in the Image and Likeness of GOD. For the first of all the commandments is, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our GOD is One Lord"; and the foundation of our Holy Religion is, "I believe in One God." And this Unity is Trinity in Unity. No distinction can be more complete than the distinction of the Three Persons in the Ever Blessed Trinity; no unity can be so absolute as the Unity of Substance. So we have it put for us in the glorious words of the Creed: "Like as we are *compelled by the Christian verity* to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be GOD and Lord: so we are *forbidden* by the Catholic Religion to say there are three GODS or three Lords. Surely, as Creation reaches its culminating point in the Institution of Holy Marriage, whereby it comes to pass that a man and his wife are no more two, but one flesh,

we see that man is indeed created in the Image and Likeness of God.

We see, then, that the Institution of Marriage was the direct outcome of the special manner of the Creation of Eve. We see that, in the time of man's innocency, in which Holy Marriage was instituted, the relation between man and woman was entirely without any taint of shame; and we see enshrined in that primeval Institution the twofold Mystery of Love and of Unity, showing forth the Image and Likeness of God in which man had been created.

But so far we have not gone behind the special manner of the Creation of Eve. We will, in our next chapter, consider how it came about that Eve was created in this particular and special manner.

CHAPTER III

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

WE have now to go behind the Creation of Eve and ask ourselves how it came to pass that Eve was formed out of the substance of Adam; for, as we have seen, it is on this fact that the Institution of Holy Marriage was based, and it is directly out of this fact that the special mystery of Holy Marriage springs, viz., that a man and his wife are no more two, but one flesh. As we read the words of its original institution we cannot fail to see that the Unity of Holy Marriage springs out of the fact that Eve was created out of the substance of Adam.

But, as has been already said, the creation of Eve cannot be detached from its context. It is not the outcome of any sudden impulse or afterthought. It fits into its place in the purpose of GOD for His Creation. It is the earthly

manifestation of a deep Mystery that lies behind it, viz., the "spiritual marriage and unity that is betwixt Christ and His Church."

We pause here a moment to note the interdependence of mysteries in the Creation of GOD. All hang together in that unity of Creation that stands over against, and answers to, the uncreated Unity of GOD. The one deep "calls to" the other. And this ought to warn us of the extreme danger of tampering in any way with any single one of the Mysteries of GOD. A child may do incalculable mischief to a valuable and complicated machine, just because it does not understand the necessary interdependence of its various parts. We think of the Mysteries of Love and of Unity enshrined in the Mystery of Marriage, and we see how they spring out of the fact that man was created in the Image and Likeness of GOD. We see how the Mystery of Marriage is inseparably linked on to the Mystery of the Creation of Eve; and we are now going further back still to see the underlying mystery that caused the special manner of the creation of Eve. Marriage to-day embodies and implies all these awful Mysteries. But men

will live on the surface of things. They see no particular mystery about Holy Marriage; they are quite ready to rush in where angels fear to tread. In the face of the fact of the interdependence of all these awful Mysteries how appalling does the ignorance become that is manifested in the fact that the Divorce Act and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill should have found a place on the statute book of a country that calls itself Christian! We say advisedly "ignorance"; for the public opinion that has led to the passing of such statutes as these is the opinion of those who entirely fail to see what constitutes the "great mystery" of Holy Marriage, and the place that it holds among the Mysteries of GOD. They have forgotten, if they ever knew, the twofold Mystery of Love and Unity; they have forgotten, if they ever knew, the Mystery of the creation of Eve; they have forgotten, if they ever knew, the Mystery of Christ and His Church; and, in attempting to deal with Marriage, while they themselves are all in the dark about it, they have made the hideous mistakes that people must make when they attempt to deal with matters that they do not understand.

GOD has "consecrated the Holy Estate of Matrimony to such an excellent Mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual Marriage and Unity betwixt Christ and His Church." Our attention is caught in these words of the Church by the term "excellent." The Mystery of Holy Marriage is an *excellent* Mystery. It is not too much to say that it is, par excellence, *the* Mystery of Creation. It is not too much to say that the right comprehension of this excelling Mystery involves the right knowledge of GOD, and therefore the right knowledge of Creation, and of our own place in it: for it involves the knowledge of Christ and His Church. Let us try to see something of what is meant by those simple words "Christ and His Church."

First, what do we mean when we use the word "Christ"? It is so familiar to us that we use it without thinking what it means. It hardly seems more to us than a sort of surname of our Lord. But of course it is nothing of the sort. It is not a name at all. It is not even a noun. It is an adjective that describes the Person to Whom alone it belongs. The English translation

of the word "Christ" is "anointed." When we say "Jesus Christ" we mean "Jesus the Anointed." When, as in the words we are immediately considering, we say simply "Christ," we mean "the Anointed One." It is the belief that GOD has an Anointed One that separates the children of light from the children of this world who "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." The whole Bible is nothing whatever but the record of God's Revelation of Himself in the Person of His Anointed One. The subject of the preaching of the Apostles to the Jews was that Jesus the Son of Mary, Whom they had crucified, was the Anointed One. The error of the Jews is that they do not recognize Jesus the Son of Mary as the Anointed One, but are still looking out for that Anointed One elsewhere. The preaching of the Apostles to the heathen was that GOD now calls all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness *by that Man Whom He has chosen* (i.e. by His Anointed One), and that GOD has made it quite plain Who this Anointed One is by the simple fact that He has raised Him from

the dead. GOD's Revelation to man is that He has an Anointed One; and it is the Resurrection of our Lord that makes it plain to Jew and Gentile alike that it is He and no other that is this Anointed One.

But what about this "anointing,"? Why is Jesus the Son of Mary called "Christ"? There are three offices to which men are set apart by anointing, viz., the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. Now the Mediatorial work of our Lord and Saviour is exercised in these three directions. He is *the* Prophet, *the* High Priest, and *the* King of heaven and earth. We are told by the Apostle that GOD anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. Our Lord Himself tells us that the words of Isaiah as to the Spirit of the Lord resting on the Rod of the stem of Jesse are spoken of Himself. It is He, then, Who is the true Prophet, so that apart from Him there is no knowledge of the Truth. It is He Who is the true High Priest by Whom the atoning Sacrifice is offered, apart from which there is no approach to GOD. It is He Who is the true King Who shall judge the world in righteousness, and

minister true judgment unto the people; Who puts all His enemies under His Feet, going out conquering and to conquer; and under Whose shadow we dwell for ever in safety. Jesus the Son of Mary, Jesus of Nazareth, is the One Mediator between GOD and His Creation, the Prophet of all Truth, the High Priest of the all-prevailing Sacrifice, the King to Whom all power is given in heaven and earth. And, as the One Mediator, it is He alone Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and the fact remains that no man cometh unto the Father but by Him.

When, therefore, we speak of our Lord as "Christ" this is what we mean. We mean that it is He Who is the One and Only Mediator between GOD and His Creation, as being in Himself the True Prophet, the One High Priest, and the universal King. But these are the offices bestowed by anointing: our Lord holds these offices as being the "Anointed One." How and by Whom was He anointed? Now the earthly anointing of prophets, priests and kings with the holy oil was one of those foreshadowings of which we are told that they were figures of

that which was to come. The earthly anointings were figures of the true anointing of the Holy Spirit. So, as we have seen, the Apostle declares that GOD anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. But still we ask *how* was He anointed with the Holy Ghost? The answer is that it is because He is Perfect GOD as well as Perfect Man that, according to His Human Nature, He is, *ipso facto*, anointed with the Holy Ghost. That our Lord should be the One Mediator, the True Prophet, Priest and King, was not a matter of arbitrary arrangement. It was the inevitable result of the fact of the Incarnation. So, for instance, speaking of the High Priesthood of our Lord, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, 'Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.'" And, with reference to His Kingship, the same truth is expressed in the words, "The Lord said unto my Lord: sit Thou on My Right Hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." Our Lord, then, is anointed with the Holy Ghost by the very fact of His Incarnation.

How significant it is that it should be the specific word "Christian" by which the disciples of our Lord and His Apostles were to be known! Christianity is the religion of those who believe in the Anointed One as such. It is the religion of those who have received GOD'S Revelation as to the One Mediator. To call our Lord "Christ" is to be pledged to the belief that He is GOD Incarnate, GOD manifest in the flesh, GOD with us. But in these days there is a growing tendency to look upon Christianity purely in the light of a high and pure system of moral philosophy. To a vast many, even of those who profess and call themselves Christians, the Mediatorial office of our Lord is either wholly ignored, or is relegated to the background as a matter of minor importance. They want to cast away all "dogma" and confine themselves to ethics. In a word, they are quite indifferent to what our Lord *is*; they are merely interested in Him as a moral Teacher. He is to them as one of the philosophers. Now in the case of a philosopher, it is plain that his whole value lies in what he thinks, does, and says. Who or what he *is* cannot possibly matter. To

the unbelieving or the half-believing of to-day this is precisely the case with our Lord. But why, then, in Heaven's name, do they call themselves "Christians"? The whole point of the term "Christian" is that it puts absolutely in the forefront, as the *sine quâ non*, the Anointing of our Lord. The value of what He says, or does, springs entirely out of the fact that He *is* that Anointed One. Take away the fact of the Incarnation, or relegate it to the limbo of "open questions," and the whole *raison d'être* of Christianity has disappeared. Let those who look upon Jesus of Nazareth simply as a moral philosopher call themselves what they please; but, in the name of common sense, do not let them call themselves "Christians"!

When, therefore, we call our Lord "Christ," and speak of ourselves as "Christians," we are, *ipso facto*, expressing our belief in His Divinity. The simple word "Christ" is a proclamation of our belief—

(*a*) That our Lord Jesus the Son of Mary is GOD the Eternal Son Incarnate in our nature.

(*b*) That as such He is the One and Only Mediator between GOD and His Creation.

(*c*) That He is ever exercising this One Mediation in three directions, as Prophet, Priest, and King; and that, therefore, apart from Him and His Mediation there can never be anything but darkness and the shadow of death.

(*d*) That by virtue of His Incarnation, and by that alone, He is the Second Adam, the True Head of the human race.

It is indeed much to which we commit ourselves when we speak of Jesus of Nazareth as Jesus "Christ."

Now the "excellence" of the Mystery of Marriage lies in the fact that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage of Christ. It is therefore a sheer impossibility that men should appreciate or understand marriage if they are in any way hazy or doubtful about "Christ." The Mystery of Marriage implies the Divinity of our Lord. Apart from that it has no meaning whatever. Would that men would remember this: they could not then lay the impious hands on GOD'S Holy Mystery that they have done here, in England, in these last days.

Having cleared our ground as to what we mean

by the word "Christ" as universally applied to our Lord, we have still to see what the fact of His Anointing has to do with the special manner of the Creation of Eve: for that is our immediate point. We have seen that the original Institution of Marriage rests upon, and must stand or fall with, the particular manner of the creation of Eve. And we have seen that there must be a solid reason for that special manner in which Eve was created. That reason is to be found in the mystery that lies behind it, viz., the Mystery of Christ and His Church. So now, being clear as to the meaning of the word "Christ," we shall in the next chapter try to see how the Mystery of Christ and His Church accounts for the mysterious creation of Eve out of the substance of Adam.

CHAPTER IV

CHRIST THE SECOND ADAM

WE have now to consider the great fact of our Lord as the Second Adam; for it is in that fact that we shall find the reason for the special manner of the creation of Eve.

Let us at the outset remember that it is characteristic of the children of light that they walk by faith, and not by sight. They have been "converted," that is, their position is exactly reversed from that of the children of this world. What comes first to the children of this world comes last with the children of light. We have seen that it is characteristic of the children of this world that they are content to live on the surface of things; that they deal with pheno-

mena as if they were absolute and self-existent, instead of remembering that they are merely manifestations of something that lies behind; that they deal with effects as if they were alsolute and self-existent, instead of regarding them merely as the outcome of their cause. And this unintelligent way of looking on life is the inevitable result of the darkness in which they habitually sit. Thus our Lord rebukes the unbelieving Jews of His day as *fools and blind*. He finds them putting the last first and the first last. They said, "Whosoever shall swear by the Temple it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the Temple he is a debtor." Again they said, "Whosoever shall swear by the Altar it is nothing; but whoso sweareth by the gift that is upon it he is a debtor." To this our Lord answers, "Ye fools and blind! Whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold?" "Whether is greater, the gift, or the Altar that sanctifieth the gift?" The children of this world catch at the first thing that comes in their way. They live, as it were, at the extreme end of the term. But what appears first to them, from their point

of view, is not really first, it is the outcome of that which lies behind it.

Now there are a certain class of people who, in dealing with the Old Testament, love to talk of "types," and "antitypes." This is quite patient of a right interpretation; but it can also be productive of much mischief. They can see a similarity between the "type" and what they call the "antitype": that strikes them at once: and they rather give themselves to the pastime of fitting the two together, much as a child amuses itself with a dissecting puzzle. But one cannot help feeling that, in their minds, the "type" is the substantial thing, while the "antitype" is a more or less shadowy resemblance of it. But this is like the foolish and blind error about the Temple and the gold. Which *really* comes first, the Old Testament "type" or the New Testament "antitype"? Which is really substance, and which is shadow? We remember the maxim as to GOD'S dealings, "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: and afterward that which is spiritual." This is the fact as to order of time; but it is not so as regards substantial priority.

The spiritual is really first and the natural second ; though in time, as it reaches us, the natural is first and the spiritual "afterward." So it is with the first and the Second Adam. The natural Adam appears first ; the Spiritual Adam appears afterward. But the first Adam is because of the Second, not the Second because of the first.

"The Second Man is the Lord from Heaven." He is Adam because in His Incarnation He has taken the Manhood into GOD. If He were not perfect Man He could in no sense be "Adam" at all. But "though He be GOD and Man, He is not two, but One Christ." In other words He has two whole and perfect Natures, yet is but One Person. "The Second Man is the Lord from Heaven." Now the titles given to our Lord, "the last Adam" or "the Second Man," are not merely fanciful expressions, but are of the deepest practical import to each one of us ; for it is just because we "have borne the image of" the first Adam, that we shall also "bear the Image of" the last Adam. The two things stand or fall together. And it was for the sake of the Second Man that the first man

was created; and it was in order that we might bear the Image of the Heavenly Man that we have borne, and do bear, the image of the earthly man. We cannot, then, understand the first man except by reference to the Second Man. It is not that the Second Man was an afterthought; the truth of the matter is that the first man existed because of the Second Man; so that, while the first man was first in order of time, the Second Man was First in order of causation. It is thus that we learn about the Second Man from our observation of the first man. For, be it remembered, we are now thinking of "the time of man's innocency," before sin had entered into the calculation at all.

Now, thinking of Adam in the time of his innocency, we find GOD saying, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an helpmeet for him." Then follows the account of the bringing of the living creatures as it were in parade before Adam, closing with the significant words, "BUT for Adam there was not found an helpmeet for him." But the first Adam is the shadow, the signification, the "type," if you will, of the last Adam; and

all this has to do with Him. If it was not good for the first Adam to be alone; if it was needful that he should have an helpmeet for him; still less is it good that the last Adam should be alone. How awful, when we come to think of it, was that loneliness of Adam in his unique glory in the Image and Likeness of GOD. For every living animal there was a mate; but he, the lord of them all, he who was to be fruitful and multiply, to replenish the earth and to subdue it, and to have dominion, was alone, and, *pro tanto*, impotent for the task that GOD had assigned to him! It is no use parading the animal creation before him. He is a living soul, in the Image and Likeness of GOD. In all the manifold beauty of the lower creation, there is not found an help that is meet for *him*. So the deep sleep from GOD falls upon him; and when he awakes out of that sleep he finds one formed out of his own glorious substance with whom he can become one in the Mystery of Love and of Unity. How wonderful does the Bible appear when we begin to meditate upon what it tells us!

But if the loneliness of the first Adam is awful,

what are we to think of the loneliness of the Second Adam? In the infinity of His Mercy and of His Love He is there when He appears, to be fruitful and multiply, and, in very deed and truth, to replenish the earth and subdue it, and to have dominion. For is He not the Christ, the Anointed King of the Creation? Well may He say, speaking of the deep sleep of His Death that was to come upon Him, "How am I *straitened* until it be accomplished?" For Him, the last Adam, the Second Man, there is to be found an help that is meet for Him; and from Eve, taken out of the side of the sleeping Adam, our thoughts travel on to that mysterious piercing of the side of the dead Christ on which St. John lay such stress and emphasis. To the man who lives merely on the surface of things it may seem a natural, if a somewhat brutal, thing for the soldier to have satisfied himself as to the reality of the death of our Lord by piercing His Heart with the spear; but clearly to St. John it means much. We cannot but be struck with the way in which he describes it. "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His Side: and forthwith came there out blood

and water. And he that saw it bear record: and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." It is true that he calls attention to the fulfilling, in this piercing, of the prophecy of Zechariah, as of the fulfilment of the Paschal injunction in that the legs of our Lord were not broken. But St. John is not playing at fitting "types" to "antitypes." We find him later on again obsessed with the awful wonder of the piercing of the Side of the dead Christ, in that mysterious saying, "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood: and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." And again he says, "There are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." Do we not see here the substance of which the creation of Eve is the shadow? Do we not see here the creation of the helpmeet for the last Adam, even that holy and glorious Church that is called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife? Then, on the third day, the last Adam awakes out of His deep sleep to His life of Eternal Glory. No longer

is He "straitened." He finds the Helpmeet for Him formed out of His Own Substance. And how touchingly is this foreshadowed in the awakening of Boaz, the great ancestor of our Lord, in the threshing-floor, when it is said, "At midnight the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold a woman lay at his feet."

We revert for a moment to the words "not by water only, but by water and blood." There is one difference between the appearance of the first Adam and the appearance of the last Adam. The last Adam, the Second Man, condescended still to appear, even though sin had entered into the world; and that infinite love and mercy led inevitably to the bitterness of His Cross and Passion. He came by water and blood; and the "deep sleep" of the last Adam was the sleep of His Death upon the Cross: and it was in that deep sleep of His Death that He found an helpmeet for Him, even that Holy Church that is His Bride. We shall consider the Church as the Bride of Christ later on; meanwhile we will just try and see how these facts about the Second Adam bear upon that Mystery

of Holy Marriage that we are now considering.

It was of the essence of the original Institution of Holy Marriage that the woman was bone of the man's bone, and flesh of his flesh ; and it is out of this fact that the Mysterious Unity of Holy Marriage springs. But, as we have seen, the first man is what he is because of the Second Man. Now the crowning point as regards the first Adam, that without which GOD'S purpose for him would not have been fulfilled, lay in the fact that an helpmeet for Him was created *out of his own substance.* So, to put it feebly, it is with the last Adam, the Second Man Who is the Lord from Heaven. He, as being the Second Adam, is the progenitor of the new race of man ; and He is so because, out of His very Human Substance, bone of His Bone, and flesh of His Flesh, has been found the Help that alone is meet for Him. Now it is this fact that is so largely ignored by many who profess and call themselves Christians. Led away by their pride of intellect, they regard our Lord mainly as a teaching philosopher, to Whom, to a certain extent, they will give intellectual

adhesion. They are, to a certain extent, His disciples, as Platonists would follow Plato, or as Mohammedans cling to Mohammed. But the Christian language is, "we are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones"; and the starting-point of the True Religion is not intellectual assent, but new Birth. Men are as really related to the Second Man as they are to the first. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians vainly talk, but is the fault of the corruption of the *nature* of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam." The Second Adam is the Head of the race. He can only be so because, and in so far as, He has an help-meet for Him, formed of His Own Substance, bone of His Bone, and flesh of His Flesh.

Holy Marriage, therefore, is the earthly shadow of the Marriage of Christ and His Church; and that Marriage of Christ rests on the fact that the Church is formed of His Substance. Is it not rightly called "a great mystery"? Is it not indeed an "excellent," an "excelling" mystery? And yet it is the common, one might

say almost common-place, occurrence of every-day life! There, in everyday life, it faces us in this prosaic time of what seems increasingly a prosaic world; but it carries us right out of this world. It goes behind sin and death; it is the abiding witness to us of the fact of woman created out of the substance of man; and because it is the abiding witness to this great marvel, it cries to us of the Incarnation and the Passion of GOD Incarnate; it is the living record that we are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones; it trumpets forth to us that wonderful and blessed word "Immanuel," "GOD with us."

Yet life seems to us grey, prosaic and common-place! So was Luz to our father Jacob, when he laid himself down there to sleep. But when he woke to a new day, Luz was no larger common-place. He was struck and thrilled with a new awe. And we are warned that it is high time that we too awaked out of sleep. We have looked at marriage, as we have looked at life, with lack-lustre eyes; but as we awake out of our materialistic, agnostic sleep, having caught the vision of the truth about Holy Marriage,

we shall cry, "Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not." "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the House of GOD, and this is the Gate of Heaven."

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

GOD has "consecrated the holy estate of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity that is betwixt Christ and His Church." It is clear that we cannot understand about Marriage unless we know something about Christ and His Church. We have tried to clear our ideas as to what we mean by "Christ"; we must now try to catch a glimpse of "His Church," otherwise we shall be all at sea as to Marriage.

Now the deeper we go in the Mysteries of GOD the more we are oppressed with the sense of our blindness and ignorance. We find it so exceedingly difficult to escape from the entanglements of a corrupt world and to see things as

they really are in the sight of GOD. And this difficulty especially hampers us when we come to think of "the Church." Yet we must face the difficulty and overcome it, if we are to have our part and lot "in the bundle of life" with our Lord. If we cannot see eye to eye with Him as regards His Church we must be content to be aliens and outcasts. We cannot recite our Creed without being forcibly reminded of this: for the belief in the Holy Catholic Church is as much an integral part of the Creed as the belief in the Holy Trinity or the Incarnation. And it fits in with our particular subject if we remind ourselves that to think of our Lord as so many do, leaving the Church as a more or less negligible quantity, is to be running counter to the declaration of GOD. "It is not good that the Man should be alone." It is to be feared that there are many who quite unsuspectingly think they are good Christians, who seem nevertheless to think that it is quite sufficient for the Second Man that He should be alone!

Now the great difficulty that all must feel in thinking at all adequately about the Church

lies in the fact that, in our fallen, corrupt nature, and in our consequently blunted intelligence, we naturally tend to individualism. To the individualistic mind "the Church" is just a collective noun, and as such represents a more or less abstract idea. We want a term in which to describe a certain set of people. We find such a term in the expression "the Church." But it is just an expression to a vast many of us. For to us, in the ignorance by which sin has clouded our intellect, the individual seems to come first, while the corporation is merely an abstraction by which we express the aggregate of the individuals of which it is composed. We find ourselves here on the old battle-ground of Realism and Nominalism. Each of these philosophical systems was an attempt to explain the exact meaning of the little word "is"; and like most attempts at explanation, they are both unsatisfactory; but, whatever may be said against Realism, experience shows that a coarse Nominalism tends to lead men away from GOD, in that it fosters that individualistic spirit that makes it so impossible for men to see things as GOD sees them.

Now when we meditate upon GOD'S ways in dealing with His Creation we are struck with the way in which He looks upon the Creation as one solid whole. In the Mind of GOD the whole comes first, and its component parts apparently second. And this is what seems so difficult to us. Let us take an instance by way of illustration. We are told that the *whole Creation* is groaning and travailing in pain together; and we are told that "the creature itself" is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of GOD; because that "the creature itself," at the manifestation of the sons of GOD, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD." Here is a puzzle for our individualistic mind! Why should sin and redemption affect the lower Creation? It had nothing to do with sin: it was incapable of sin. Quite so! But GOD, if one may use such an expression, has regard to the solidarity of the Creation. It was at the point of man that it failed; but it did fail at that point. And, "since by man came death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the dead." Therefore the Redemption comes at the point of human nature;

but as man's sin was the failure of the whole Creation, so is man's redemption the redemption of the whole.

Once more. We are taught that the Church is the Body of Christ. The Apostle says, "Ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular." "We"—the collective "we"—"we" in our corporate capacity are the Body of Christ: and "we" in our several individual capacity are members of that Body. There is something more than an abstraction about "the body." It has an importance greater than that of any individual member. For the body can go on without one or two of its members; but no member can live for an instant apart from the body. The whole comes first, the parts are subordinate. It is not that the body was finally arrived at by a collecting together of members; the sole life of the individual members is that they are incorporated in the body.

Let us, then, try to shake ourselves clear from the limitations of our fallen intelligence, and use that gift of faith by which we can see things as they really are in GOD. For we have now to think of "the Church" as the Bride of Christ.

"Come hither," said the angel to St John, "and I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." St. John is carried into an exceeding high mountain to see the Bride of Christ. What does he see? A glorious CITY, the New Jerusalem, *coming down from* GOD out of Heaven, adorned as a bride for her husand! The City is the Bride: the nations of the redeemed are within it. It is *the City* that lies foursquare; it is *the City* that is all-glorious and beautiful; it is *the City* that has no need of the sun, because the Glory of GOD lightens *the City* and the Lamb is the light of *it*. All this glory and all this light comes to the "nations of them which are saved" simply because, and in so far as, they are citizens of *the City*. Let us think a moment of the fact that this City, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, *comes down from* GOD *out of Heaven*; and as we meditate upon this great fact our minds will travel back to Eve and Adam. "The rib which the Lord GOD had taken from Man made He a woman, *and brought her unto the man.*" Eve, as it were, came down from GOD. She had not been formed of the dust of the ground; she, the crowning point of the Creation, had been

specially formed by GOD *out of the substance of the man,* and was *brought by* GOD to the man. As in one way the creation of Eve foreshadows the creation of the Church, so in another way it was because the Church comes down from GOD out of Heaven that Eve was brought by GOD to Adam.

If St. John has a vision of the Church as the Heavenly City, St. Paul has his vision of the Church as the Body of Christ. And here we note the same thing. There is the City with the nations included in it because they are citizens of it. Here is the Body, with the members incorporated in it because that membership is their sole life. And in each case we are reminded of Eve formed out of the substance of Adam. The Church is the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, because GOD has fashioned her of the glorious Substance of His Sacred Humanity. There is no such thing as an isolated spiritual life. Outside of Christ and His Church all is darkness and death.

Now all this is mere high-flown nonsense to the individualistic mind. Exactly so! Because the individualistic mind is the "carnal mind";

it is the mind of the "natural man"; it is the outcome and the expression of original sin. And we are expressly told that to the natural mind the things of GOD are "*foolishness.*" The Individualist either has never received, or is scorning to use, that spiritual faculty whereby alone the things of GOD can be discerned. What is the Individualist's idea of the Christian Religion? It is that each man by himself and for himself makes his terms with GOD by his individualistic belief: and that having (to use their expression, which is all wrong) "come to Christ," he looks round to find other men who have "come to Christ," and joins himself to such a group of them as best pleases him. This, we may say in passing, is the avowed principle that constitutes the fatal mistake of the Salvation Army. They labour to bring men to avow Christ as their Saviour; such men may then draft themselves off into one or other of what are called "the Churches," or may remain outside of them all. But while it is the openly avowed principle of the Salvation Army it is none the less the principle, at bottom, of all the Protestant sects. Their conception of the Church is that

of a federation of men who happen to think alike. No wonder that men do not understand the Mystery of Marriage! No wonder that they regard it, and deal with it, as a human institution! Would it be conceivably possible that a vote should be taken in the House of Commons as to whether the Heavenly City should, or should not, come down from GOD out of Heaven? Is the House of Commons prepared to vote as to whether "the Lamb" shall or shall not divorce His Wife and marry another? They would of course indignantly repudiate any such suggestion. Yet they are quite prepared to vote yes or no as to GOD's Mystery of Marriage. How does this anomaly come about? It is because the House of Commons as such does not believe in Christ and His Church. And those outside the House of Commons (who create the public opinion of which Parliament is simply the mouthpiece) can only tamper with Holy Marriage as they do because they either do not believe in Christ and His Church, or, if any small shreds of such belief still cling to them, they cannot connect earthly Marriage with the Marriage of the Lamb.

And it will be well here to note that it is never from the Protestant sects as such that we can look for any defence of the Divine principle of Holy Marriage. This is notoriously the case. In Marriage questions, as in most others, Parliament expresses what is popularly known as "the Nonconformist conscience," and "the Nonconformist conscience" is not in any way violated when Marriage is dealt with as a human institution. Naturally so; for the Nonconformist conscience is individualistic; the idea of the Church is that of a federation of kindred spirits. The individual comes first, and the Church a long way second: the member is to be considered first, and the body is a negligible quantity! They "cannot discern" the Mystery of Marriage because they "cannot discern" the Mystery of Christ and His Church.

The Church is the Bride of Christ because she is formed out of the Substance of His Sacred Humanity. She is His "Body" because she is partaker of His Human Nature. Thus she is clearly defined and marked off from all else. She is called in the Creed the Communion of Saints: and this again is as integral a part of

the Christian Creed as the belief in the Holy Trinity or the Incarnation. What is meant by "Saints"? The Creed tells us when it expresses belief in the forgiveness of sins. And, in the divinely authoritative comment on these words which is given us in the Nicene Creed, we have the words, "I acknowledge One Baptism for the remission of sins." Thus the forgiveness of sins is found in the One Baptism. The Bride of Christ is formed of Christ's Substance, and it is by Baptism that children of the first Adam are "born again" because it is by Baptism that they are made "members of Christ." Mark the words. Some might suppose that Baptism was a rite of initiation, by which men were admitted into a society that is called "the Church." This, one would imagine, is about what the Baptists, if not all the sects, practically do believe. But the Church says emphatically "members *of Christ.*" Of course! Because the Church is formed of the Substance of the Sacred Humanity. So we arrive at that which differentiates the Church from all else. It is the Communion of Saints. That is to say it is the fellowship of those who have received the for-

giveness of sins by being made partakers of the Sacred Humanity of the Second Man.

Now all this is "foolishness" to the "Non-conformist conscience." Exactly so! So is the Mystery of Marriage. This is just our point. There is much to be said, as much has been said, about Holy Baptism and Church life. But we do not want to obscure the main issue of this particular book. Our point is that those who do not see that the Church is the Bride of Christ because she has been formed by GOD out of His Sacred Humanity do not see the Mystery of earthly Marriage; while, conversely, those who "cannot discern" the Divine Mystery of Holy Marriage cannot, and do not, discern the Mystery of the Church as the Bride of Christ. So our experience teaches us that, as a matter of fact, those who do not acknowledge One Baptism *for the remission of sins* have lost the key to the knowledge of the Mystery of Marriage.

The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, is, then, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. Formed of His Substance, she comes down from GOD out of Heaven. But we have yet to go further back still in the Mysteries of GOD to

find the root of the Spiritual Marriage and Unity that is betwixt Christ and His Church. And this will form the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON

WE have tried to go back, step by step, from the simple fact of the Institution of Marriage in the time of man's innocency to that of which it was the outward expression, to find the cause of which that Institution was the effect. We have seen first how the two-fold mystery of Love and of Unity is enshrined in the Institution of Marriage, in that the central point of Holy Marriage is that the man and his wife are "no more two, but one flesh." We have seen, next, that this Unity springs directly out of the special manner of the Creation of Eve. We have seen that this special manner of creation cannot be detached from its whole context: that is to say, we have seen that there must be a reason why love should have been created in this especial manner. And we have

found that the special manner of the creation of Eve was the consequence of a great Mystery that lay behind it, viz., the Mystery of Christ and His Church. We have tried to clear our minds as to what we mean by the word "Christ," and why that word is applied to our Lord. We have seen that He is the last Adam, the Second Man, the true Head and Representative of the human race just because He is perfect Man; and the perfection of His Manhood lies in the fact that it is the Human Nature of GOD Himself; that although He has two whole and perfect Natures yet He is One Only Person, the Eternally Begotten Son of the Eternal Father. Then we saw that for this Second Man there must be an helpmeet for him, and that that can only be found in His Church, because she has been formed out of the very substance of His Sacred Humanity.

But now we must go a step further back again. The Second Adam is "straitened" as long as He abides alone. We can dimly see how the Mystery of Christ and His Church is necessary for the completion of GOD'S purpose in man; but we have yet to try to see the reason

for that purpose at all: and we may well be filled with an access of holy fear as we enter into the cloud of this exceeding Mystery, and feel that we are drawing near to the thick darkness where GOD is.

What is the place of man in the Creation? We answer in the words of the Psalm, "Thou madest him lower than the angels, to crown him with glory and worship. Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of Thine Hands: and Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." We seem to see that man has dominion in the Creation because he represents GOD Whose Creation it is; for he is made in the Image and Likeness of GOD; but we seem also to see that this is not a matter of merely arbitrary arrangement. For the simple fact is that man represents in himself the whole Creation in that he is both material and spiritual, so that all things visible and invisible are summed up and represented in him. The first aspect of the Creation, as we have already considered, is that of one solid unity, over against the Uncreated Unity of God: and this unity is bound up in the nature of man who, by the mere fact

of being what he is, represents the whole as binding together in himself the material and the spiritual, the visible and the invisible. He stands for the Unity of Creation; and that Unity is bound and summed up in him. Given a Creation at all, man must clearly have dominion in it. But the first Adam, by the fall, lost this dominion: and the whole Creation was therefore groaning and travailing in pain; for it had become "subject to vanity." But "the Second Man is the Lord from Heaven," and He takes up the dominion of man that alone makes the Creation intelligible at all; and the Church, formed of His Substance, is the Communion of Saints, the Body, the Fellowship of those who, by the One Baptism for the remission of sins, are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones; so that, in the Communion of Saints man is once more in his right place, and the Creation delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of GOD. "Of His Own Will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." These words represent the charter of the baptized.

Given, then, as we have said, that there was to be a Creation, we see that the dominion of it falls to the Second Man, the last Adam. But are we to take Creation for granted, and start from it as an established fact? or has it pleased GOD to show us anything as to His purpose in creating at all? The children of this world cannot get behind the Creation. They must accept it as an established fact, and, finding it there, but knowing nothing of the reason of its being there, they must just deal with it as best they can. But the Christian has heard something from our Lord that takes him behind the Creation, and opens to him the very Mind and Purpose of GOD Himself. Now what our Lord has told us, and what none of the children of this world know, is that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king who made a marriage for his son. Here are the simple words of Eternal Truth.

Now, as we consider this simple declaration of our Lord we see three factors: (*a*) the king; (*b*) his son; (*c*) the marriage of his son. And that is really all. To those whose main, if not only, idea of religion is that it consists in moral effort to

be finally rewarded, this declaration of our Lord must be singularly meaningless; for the all-important "we," whose thoughts and efforts are thought to constitute religion, do not appear to be "in the running." There is a king, there is his son, and there is his purpose of marriage for his son. And *that* is what our Lord tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven is like! We shall surely not be wrong if we say that when we speak of "the Kingdom of Heaven" we are speaking of Creation as standing in its right and true relation to GOD the Creator. The right relation, then, of the Creation to the Creator is like unto a king who made a marriage for his son. Now we can see at once about the king and his son. We worship One GOD in Trinity and Trinity in Unity; and GOD's Revelation of Himself to us is that the Father is eternally Father because He eternally begets the Son, Who is of One Substance with Him; while the Holy Ghost, Consubstantial and Co-equal with the Father and the Son, is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. The Eternal Generation of the Son, and the Eternal Procession of the Holy Ghost, is the simple act

that is the Life of GOD. Just in passing we note that there is no juggling with words here; nor is there any spinning of finely drawn or far-fetched ideas. Everything that we can see, or imagine, as existing, simply exists because of the Eternal Generation of the Son and because of the Eternal Procession of the Holy Ghost. When we have come to the Eternal Generation and the Eternal Procession we have come absolutely to the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. We are face to face with the Absolute, beyond which nothing is conceivable. We have at last reached the rest of our soul. Here is the One Thing that is Absolute and necessary. Everything else conceivable is merely relative to and contingent upon this. Our restless soul is satisfied with the Vision of Absolute Truth.

We find ourselves here right behind Creation itself. The Creation and its purpose are merely contingent upon the Absolute Will of GOD, with Whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We are back here at the point (to put it in our stupid bungling way) at which there is, as yet, nothing outside the Life of GOD

Himself. Now there, in that appalling tranquillity of the Inner Life of GOD, is revealed to us the Mind and Purpose of GOD. It is that there should be *a Marriage* for His Son! *Marriage* for the Eternal Son is the one unchanging and unchangeable Mind of GOD! We cannot say why; we cannot even ask why: for we have reached the Final and the Absolute. But we note, in adoring wonder, that there, in the Final and the Absolute, we find the eternal purpose of *Marriage*.

Now Marriage is essentially the union of two so that they are no longer two but one. It is the epitome of Love and Unity. GOD is Love: GOD is Unity. The Eternal Purpose of the Inner Life of GOD is *Marriage*. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain King *Who made a Marriage for His Son.*" Here is the King; here is His Son. But Marriage implies a Bride outside of the Bridegroom, who becomes one with Him. But, as yet, there *is* nothing outside of GOD. It is clear that until there is a Bride there can be no Marriage. But Marriage is the unchanging eternal Purpose of the Inner Life of GOD. Therefore His unchanging Purpose is

that there should be something outside of Himself as a Bride for His Son! *And so it came to pass that in the beginning* GOD *created the heaven and the earth.* The purpose of Creation is the Marriage of God! Let the children of this world, who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, take Creation for granted. Of course! it is all that is possible to them. Like their master, "They have no more that they can do." But we children of light do not, and will not, take Creation for granted, because we *know* that the Purpose of Creation is the Marriage of GOD.

The Creation, then, is to be the Bride; and the whole Creation is summed up and represented in man. It is then at the point of man that GOD and His Creation become one: and the Church, formed out of the Substance of the Second Man, stands as the reason, and the justification, of Creation. In the Marriage of the Lamb the Purpose of GOD is fulfilled. Evil, by which the devil sought to rob GOD of His Creation, has come and gone, and is past, as the remembrance of a dream when one awaketh. The Second Man has asserted His Dominion over the works of GOD'S Hands; the first heaven

and the first earth are passed away, and there is no more sea; He that sits on the Throne says, "Behold, I make all things new." And again we are told that "a Voice came out of the Throne, saying, 'Praise our GOD, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great'; " and from out of the new Creation, which is summed up in the new race of man, comes the answer to this great call from GOD, "Alleluia; for the Lord GOD Omnipotent reigneth." We pause here a moment to weigh the meaning of these words that are so familiar to us. They are the expression (are they not?) of the absolute and final removal of all the barriers that sin had heaped up between GOD and His Creation; they are the assertion of the conviction that now, at last, its chequered history lying in the past, the sin that "entered in" having been completely cast out and destroyed, the Creation is ready to fulfil the purpose for which GOD called it into being. And so the song of Creation goes on, "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him: *for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready.*" And we note the words that follow: "He saith unto

me, Write, Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of GOD."

We see how all this is foreshadowed in the parable of the Marriage of the Kingdom. The purpose of the King was to make a Marriage for His Son. That purpose was delayed for the moment by sin. But it was only delayed, not frustrated; and when the King had asserted His authority, and the murderers had been destroyed, His Mind and His Purpose were still the same: and once more He said, "The wedding is ready." Let us consider the words spoken by Him that sat on the Throne, "Behold, I make all things new." Why should He make all things new? For the same purpose as led Him in the beginning to create the heaven and the earth; for the Marriage which had, for the moment, been delayed by the "entering in" of sin. "I make all things new" is parallel to "the Marriage of the Lamb is come, *and His Wife hath made herself ready*."

But the end and purpose of Marriage is Unity. "They shall no more be two but one." And if the Purpose of GOD in Creation was that there

might be a Marriage for His Son, then His Purpose for Creation is Unity with Himself. No Unity can be so conceivably complete as the Unity of Substance in the GODHEAD. It is of this that our Lord speaks when He says, "I and My Father are One." It is of this Unity of Substance that He speaks when He says, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." His Sonship, His Personal Life, is described when we are told that He is "the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of His Person." So, by the Marriage of GOD with His Creation all comes back to the Unity of GOD: and we dimly see what St. Paul means when he says, "When all things are subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that put all things under Him, *that* GOD *may be all in all.*" It is then Marriage, the Unity of two so that they become one, that lies at the bottom of all things: for it is the Purpose and Mind of the Inner Life of GOD.

"The foolishness of GOD is wiser than men." To the children of this world the Marriage of the King's Son seems a hazy romance; a fine-drawn and far-fetched idea. Unity is an abstraction

to them; Marriage does not strike them as a mystery. Yet this hazy romance, this far-fetched idea, is the very cause of the existence of things created at all! The children of this world live, as we have seen, merely on the surface of things. They cannot tell whence they come and whither they go. They practically say to GOD, "Depart from us"; but He will not be dismissed. They have nothing to do with Creeds, Sacraments, and Worship: they think that they have thus barred GOD out. But there in the midst of them is Love and Marriage: and Love and Marriage point to the Unity of GOD with Creation, and of Creation with GOD. We cannot get out of the sphere of Creation. If you shut Religion out of the door it comes in again at the window. Go where you please, you will find the love of man for woman, and the love of woman for man, culminating in the Unity of Marriage. And there those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand will find the earthly picture and signification of GOD and His Creation. No wonder that Satan rages against Marriage! No wonder that he persuades his dupes to lay impious hands upon it, even as he persuaded

his followers to crucify the Lord of Glory! In contending for the sanctity and inviolability of Marriage the children of GOD are contending for His Truth: and, having daily before their eyes the sweet mysteries of Love and Marriage, they will see that the Lord is in this place even though men know it not.

CHAPTER VII

SOME FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

WE have now to consider some of the consequences that flow from the great fact that GOD has consecrated the Holy Estate of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual Marriage and unity that is betwixt Christ and His Church. The considerations put forth in the foregoing chapters will show us: (*a*) that to estimate earthly Marriage aright we must have a right knowledge of GOD and His Creation; and (*b*), *per contra*, that if we in any way deviate from the complete fullness of GOD's Revelation we shall be proportionally incapable of a due estimate of Holy Marriage. We have tried, in the preceding chapters, to trace Holy Marriage back to its source in the Inner Life of GOD. We are now, therefore, in a position to be able to

appreciate the bearings of the truth as to Marriage, firstly, on what are called the Marriage questions of the day, and secondly, as to the mutual relation, and therefore duties, of husbands and wives.

We have already glanced at the "Marriage Questions," viz., the "question" of Divorce, and the "question" as to the Table of Forbidden Degrees. These "questions" that have long been seething in men's minds have come to a head in England in the course of the last fifty or sixty years in the passing of two Acts of Parliament, one by which Divorce and re-marriage were recognized in law, the other by which it was made legal for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister. Now no one supposes for a moment that Parliament attempted to arrogate to itself any function of creating right or wrong. All, of course, that it claimed to do (and rightly claimed) was to be able to remove legal disabilities that had hitherto stood in English law. It was no question of right and wrong; it was a question of legal and illegal. Up to the passing of the Divorce Act it was not legal for an Englishman to have more than one wife living at the same

moment. The Divorce Act set him free to have two, or even more, wives living at once. Up to the passing of the Deceased Wife's Sister Act it was as illegal for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister as it is now for a woman to marry her deceased husband's brother. But the right or wrong of the matter remains exactly where it did before. Parliament can make a wrong thing legal, but it cannot make a wrong thing right ; and to do it justice, it never supposes for a moment that it can. We are then quite clear on all sides that the Divorce Act and the Deceased Wife's Sister Act have nothing whatever to do with the right or wrong of the matter.

Now no one will do Members of Parliament, and those whom they represent, the injustice of supposing that they wanted to legalize something that was wrong in itself. But one will not be doing them an injustice if one says that, thinking certain things to be, under certain circumstances, *desirable*, they were anxious to persuade themselves that they were at least permissible. But a little thought will show that this is to put oneself on a somewhat slippery and dangerous place. Not long ago a young man who had

been a devout and earnest Catholic parted company with his Faith and Religion. When he was wavering he spoke about his different ties to a friend. This very wise friend put him the following crucial question: "Do you want to believe something that you find it difficult to believe? Or do you want to disbelieve something that it is irksome to you to believe?" Now, *mutatis mutandis*, we may put this question to those who have succeeded in altering the Marriage laws of this Realm. No one can say that there is the smallest *necessity* for a man to marry again during the lifetime of his wife. One might rather have thought that the fact of having made a mess of one marriage would have suggested to him the desirability of not immediately rushing into another. But it is to be feared that, in some cases at any rate, the desire to marry some one else lay at the bottom of the wish to be able to do so. To put it in the form suggested by the above question it was not that he *wanted* to believe in the indissolubility of Marriage, but found it difficult to do so; it was that he *wanted* to believe that it was dissoluble. We are on a very dangerous line when

we start from our desires, and try to pull legal enactments into line with them. The chances are ten to one that, in such a case we shall be biased judges. The wish to be rid of an unhappy marriage is not a sound basis on which to found a right judgment as to Marriage.

But we go further than this in thinking of the unhappy marriages that are the *raison d'être* of the Divorce Act, of which, be it remembered, re-marriage is really the point. It is surely not too much to say that in an unhappy marriage there are faults on both sides. It may have been entered into originally on a wrong basis. It may have been a mere *Mariage de convenance*, or it may have had nothing behind it but earthy, animal passion. Both parties would be to blame in such cases. Or, if one takes the case of an unfaithful wife, can the husband really acquit himself of all shadow of blame? In the rush to the Divorce Court and the subsequent so-called re-marriage one misses any note of humility or contrition for any share that the husband may have had in causing the unfaithfulness of the wife, or the wife of that of the husband. If separation is really inevitable, is

it too much to ask that each should undergo the strain of remaining *pro tem.* as they are, as a penance for the faults of the unhappy marriage?

So far we are only on the common-sense ground of the matter: we are taking the devotees of the Divorce Court on their own ground. But before we leave this lower ground let us dispose of the absolute puerility about "the innocent" and "the guilty" party. The claim of the Divorce Court is to legalize re-marriage. The ground of that claim must be the mistaken idea that Marriage is dissoluble. But if it is dissolved it is dissolved; and the one party must be as free as the other! Very weak-kneed Christians have attempted to draw a distinction (when considering the relations of divorces to the Church) between the innocent and the guilty party. But this is indeed to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. For if the weak-kneed Christian can see no sin in divorce, and re-marriage, "innocent" or "guilty" can really matter very little! We may then finally dismiss "the innocent" and "the guilty" party from all further consideration. Directly we lift the mat-

ter above the plane of merely earthly common sense, on which for the moment we have placed it, we see at once that any apologist of the Divorce Act has entirely missed the point of earthly marriage as being a signification of something that lies behind it. For, of course, since that is so, the something that lies behind must be considered as at least a factor in the case. How does the Divorce Act look in the light of Christ and His Church? If divorce and re-marriage are possible there, then by all means let them be possible on earth! And, be it remembered, our Lord has had a faithless spouse to deal with. He can, in this way, be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. It is not for nothing in these days that the Book of Hosea stands in the Bible. GOD there condescends to present Himself as the Pattern of dealing with an unfaithful spouse. He certainly does not carry her off to the Divorce Court! Who can read unmoved the lovely words of the true Husband to the erring wife: "Thou shalt abide for Me many days; *so will I be for thee.*" In His Love He builds a wall and hedges her way about with thorns that she

may not be able to find her lovers. In His Love He is content Himself to go with her into the wilderness, and to abide there till she learns to love Him, and Him alone. He does not cast her off and go Himself to find another wife. Two wrongs can never make a right. Yet, in modern England we seem almost to think that they may. The wife, let us say, goes away with another man; the husband seems to think that that justifies him in going off after another woman; and the weak-kneed Christian, shame to him, bleats about "the *innocent* party!" No! if divorce is possible on earth, it must be possible in Heaven. But our Lord tells us that it comes of the hardness of men's hearts: and there is no "hardness" in the Sacred Heart of the Second Man!

Let it be clearly understood here that we are not speaking of an "annulled" marriage at all. The "annulling" of a marriage is simply the declaration that there was, all along, a nullifying impediment that prevented its ever having been a true marriage at all. The sin of the Divorce Act lies in its claim to *dissolve* Marriage. This is, of course, a sheer impossibility from the very

nature of the case. There is all the difference in the world between "judicial separation" and divorce. Let it never be forgotten that the Divorce Act is based upon a claim to be able to *dissolve* Marriage. It is this claim that constitutes the sin of the Divorce Act and the consequent sin of those who avail themselves of it. And (for this is our point) it is only possible for men to have fallen into this sin because they have not known that Marriage has been consecrated into the earthly signification of the Marriage of the Lamb.

And as with Divorce, so with the other Marriage "question" of the day, viz., so-called "Marriage" with a deceased wife's sister. Here again we will start on the merely earthly plane of common sense. It cannot be said that there is the smallest *necessity* for a man to marry his wife's sister. We know, of course, the stock argument that she is the best person to look after her sister's children. But what has that got to do with Marriage? Until the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill was passed it was always possible for the deceased wife's sister to look after the children: and most people have probably

known instances of noble and unselfish women giving themselves to this task. But now, of course, it is made practically impossible for them to do so. formerly they were shielded and protected by the Table of Forbidden Degrees. Now that shield has been taken away from them! Then, still on the common-sense ground, one cannot but marvel at the fatuous want of common sense that is exhibited when the Table of Degrees is abrogated at one point, while left to stand at all the others. The utter absurdity of this proceeding has often been shown in the following concrete instance. Two brothers, whom we will call A and B, marry two sisters, whom we will call C and D. A and D both die. B, under the terms of the new Act, can legally marry C because she is his deceased wife's sister. At the same time he can *not* legally marry her because she is his deceased brother's wife! Here is the result of letting go the Table in one instance, while retaining it in every other particular. We have already noticed that to interfere with the Table in one particular is to destroy the whole principle upon which it is based: and the result of this is to make all the other pro-

hibitions (which are still to be retained) merely arbitrary enactments. We all know the difference between "positive" and "moral" commands. To allow the so-called marriage with the deceased wife's sister is to destroy the "morality" of every other prohibition. Again, it is the wish to square the law with personal desire that has produced their foul blot on our Statute Book; and, as we have seen, if men start with a pre-conceived desire, they will not be impartial judges.

But when we leave the ground of merely earthly common sense for a ground that goes much deeper, we see that those who have brought about the passing of this odious Bill had no thought of the Creation of Eve, and of its bearing on the Institution of Marriage. In their hurry to make their desires legal they forgot the Oneness of Christ and His Church because the Church was formed out of the Substance of His Sacred Humanity. They jeered at the fact that, in the "excellent" Mystery of Holy Marriage, a man and his wife are "one flesh." It was that fact that stared them in the face in the Table of Forbidden Degrees; and, therefore, to suit

their own selfish ends they set themselves to destroy that damning Table. But, as we have said before, though Parliament can make a thing legal, it cannot make it right. The right or wrong of the matter are absolutely untouched by Acts of Parliament.

Two great principles lie at the root of Holy Marriage :—

(*a*) That it cannot be dissolved.

(*b*) That the man and his wife are *one flesh*.

If men ask why this is so, the answer is perfectly simple. It is because earthly Marriage is based upon the Marriage of God.

CHAPTER VIII

HUSBAND AND WIFE

THE exhortation given to the newly married turns upon the duties that await them in that holy estate into which they have just entered. And that exhortation (which is to serve as the model upon which any address to the newly married is to be based) is just an epitome of the charge laid upon husbands and wives in the Holy Scripture: and we note that these duties are not suggested as forming the best basis on which to build up a happy married life, but that they are the direct result of the relation between husband and wife being, *ipso facto*, what it is. To those who live on the surface of things the real relation between husband and wife is a sealed book: they can only make the best they can of the position, and by mutual agreement come to a *modus vivendi*. But the

Church is careful to remind her children of the great fact that underlies the mystery of their own marriage; and, given that great fact, the daily duty of married life is obvious. Christian husbands and wives live as they do because they are what they are. GOD's commands for them are not aribitrary enactments, but are the direct outcome of the awful Mystery into which He has called them.

Now we note that, as they have been privileged to enter upon that holy estate in which is enshrined the twofold Mystery of Love and Unity, their life henceforth is to be the life of mutual interdependence and of the sacrifice of each to the other. They are brought directly into the bright cloud of the Mystery of the Life of GOD Who is Love, viz., that it is more blessed to give than to receive. We note first the command of GOD to the husband. He is to love his wife in quite a special way, viz., as Christ did love the Church. And how is this? The answer comes straight. "He gave Himself for it." And then immediately follows the fact of Christ, as the Second Man, being the Head of the Church. He was content to give Himself in

the bitterness of His Passion, "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the Word; *that He might present it to Himself* a glorious Church"; that the Church, His Bride, might be truly an help, meet for Him. And, in connection with these words, we remember that we are taught in the Holy Scripture that the woman was created for the man, not the man for the woman. But the woman, as we have seen all along, was created out of the very substance of the man, because the Bride of Christ is formed out of the very Substance of His Sacred Humanity. Therefore the exhortation proceeds to say, in the very words of the Holy Scripture, "So ought men to love their wives *as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself*; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church": and here the husband is taken straight back to the Mystery of the Creation of Eve, which, in its turn, rested on the Creation of the Church out of the Substance of the Sacred Humanity. In entering upon Holy Marriage the husband has not come into an earthly estate to which he is to accommodate

himself as best he can; he has entered into the shadow of an awful mystery; he is raised to the dizzy height of being on earth the living signification of Christ in the relation in which He stands to His Church: and so the words of the Holy Scripture go on, "for we are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones." And, in this connection, we are to remember what we are told in the Holy Scripture, viz., that the husband, from the moment of his entering upon the Mystery of Holy Marriage, ceases to have power over his own body, because that "power" has passed into the possession of the wife. What a revelation is given us in these words of the completeness of the Sacrifice wherewith Christ has given Himself to the Church! May we not here, in passing, think of the completeness wherewith our Lord has given His Church power over His Body in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar? "The husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife." The Altar may be prepared for the Adorable Sacrifice morning by morning; the Holy Sacrifice may be the core and centre of the life of a parish; or the Altar may be bare and deserted. The

Holy Sacrifice may be offered with all the accompaniment of music and ritual in which Catholic love and reverence has expressed itself; or it may be shorn even of the veriest decencies, and the Blessed Sacrament Itself may, through ignorance, be subjected to indignities that make one shudder. Yet He makes no sign; He utters no complaint. Or again, we may think of the Blessed Sacraments in the countless Tabernacles of Christendom, perhaps the Focus of the loving Adoration of the children of GOD, or perhaps forgotten and neglected. Still He makes no sign, and utters no complaint. "The Husband hath not power over His Own Body, but the Wife."

Lastly, the exhortation reminds the husband that he is to use the power over the wife's body that is his with chivalrous, self-sacrificing generosity, "giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the Grace of life."

We pause here in all this to see the husband as the earthly representative of Christ in His Relation to His Spouse the Church; giving Himself for it that He may present it to Him-

self; nourishing and cherishing it even as His Own Flesh; giving it the power over His Own Body; tenderly compassionate with its weakness: and all this because she is bone of His Bone, and flesh of His Flesh. For Love is the very antithesis of selfishness; and in the Marriage of the Lamb we see that, in very deed and truth, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

From the duty of the husband, as representing Christ, the exhortation passes to the duty of the wife, as representing the Church. Here we feel at once that the simplicity of the issue as set forward in Holy Scripture is blurred and complicated by the appearing, at this time of our history, of the general movement throughout the world towards what is sometimes called the "emancipation" of woman. We hear on all sides of woman's "rights" and woman's "wrongs"; and we cannot but note that this movement synchronizes with another "movement" that is going on, silently but surely, viz., the movement against the fifth Commandment in the quite altered relation of children to parents. Now one wants to speak of the "woman's movement" temperately and fairly. However re-

pulsive it may be in the exaggerations of some of its devotees, one does not wish to charge the whole movement with the sins of some of its protagonists. But one cannot but feel that two things lie at the bottom of it all that it is very difficult to reconcile with the Word of GOD. Is it unfair to say that there seems to be a desire on the part of "the new woman" to pose as being exactly on an equality with man? It is surely to this desire that we must ascribe the mannish swagger, the vulgarity of tone, the "slangy" talk, the loud self-assertiveness, the *outrê* dress, and the general coarsening that so many of us deplore. These swinging athletic swashbucklers of women are probably wanting to assert their absolute equality with man.

And if this desire is the first thing that seems to the onlooker to suggest itself in the modern woman, the other thing that apparently lies at the bottom of a good deal of the "movement" is the manifestation of a certain individualism; the desire, on the part of many young women, to "live their life"; the eager rush from home to do battle in the arena of the world. Now do not let us be mistaken. It is a good and a

blessed thing that so many ways should now be open to women in which to earn an honest living where need so requires. It is not of this in the least that one would complain. But there is a widespread appearance of what one might perhaps call scorn of home life as such, among those on whom no necessity is laid for earning a livelihood. Straws show which way the current is tending; and contemporary fiction is full of this sort of thing; and as one listens and watches, one cannot feel that the satire of *Punch* is altogether without justification. "Father is paralysed, and mother is nearly blind: so I must go and be a Hospital Nurse." Individualism is not a good guide in the world in which our Lord was crucified. It may, of course, be that the parents are genuinely willing that the girl should go her way and "live her life"; but one has a shrewd suspicion that, not perhaps unfrequently, their "willingness" does not amount to more than acquiescence, because they probably know that she will take her line *coûte qu'il coûte*. Again, one does not want to be in any way unfair or harsh in judgment; but one cannot but feel that among some of those who are most eager

in the "woman's movement" there is a considerable scorn of the Holy Estate of Matrimony; and one cannot but fear that these people tend to indoctrinate women younger than themselves with that same ungodly scorn. We may then say, to put it in the mildest way, that there is at any rate a considerable danger that attaches itself to the "woman's movement," and that it calls for great care and discrimination if it is not to become an unmixed evil.

We turn now to see what the Holy Scripture has to say about the relation of women to man; and, at the risk of provoking shrill remonstrance, we must insist, on the authority of GOD the Holy Ghost, that "the woman was created for the man"; and we further insist, on the same authority, as against a good deal that finds expression in the exaggerations of the "woman's movement," that "neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord." And, turning once more to the Exhortation, we find that as the husband represents Christ in His relation to the Church, so the wife represents the Church in its relation to Christ; and this, be it remembered once more,

not by any arbitrary arrangement, or as the result of a mutual agreement, but just because Eve was created out of the substance of Adam, as the Church was created out of the Substance of Christ. But, as we have seen, the Church is the summing up of the whole Creation; so that it is in the Marriage of the Lamb that GOD and His Creation become one, in that final Unity for which all things were created and made. The wife, then, in representing the Church in its relation to Christ, represents Creation in its relation to GOD. And therefore, hard as this saying may seem to some, it is nevertheless a fact that woman, in the truth of her life, can no more seek to be "emancipated" from man than the Creation can aspire to be "emancipated" from GOD. There has been, alas! in the Creation, an attempt at such "emancipation" when Lucifer said "I will be as GOD"; but it is not an encouraging example to follow.

Here, then, is the glorious ideal; the man in the Image of GOD, for whom it is not good that he should be alone; the woman created for the man to be an helpmeet for him; the man loving the woman even as Christ loved the Church,

and giving himself for her; the woman possessing the "power" over the body of the man, and finding the completeness of her being in him, even as the Creation finds the reason of its existence in GOD. And as we see all this in the everyday Mystery of Holy Marriage, here before our eyes, we realize that the heavens are opened, and that we see Visions of GOD!

One last word as to the relation of husband and wife; and, for obvious reasons, it can be but a word. The end of Unity is fruitfulness. We cry in adoring delight to the Second Adam, "Thy Wife shall be as the fruitful vine: upon the walls of Thine House; Thy children like the olive branches: round about Thy Table. Lo, *thus* shall the Man be blessed: That feareth the Lord." And as earthly Marriage is the signification to us here of the Marriage of the Lamb, so the Church, in telling us of the causes for which Matrimony was ordained, puts fruitfulness in the forefront. "*First* it was ordained for the procreation of children." And no one can say that, in the general turning of things upside down in man's manifold revolt against GOD,

this solemn declaration of the Church is not pre-eminently needed.

Now, as we see the height to which Holy Marriage leads us, and remember that Marriage in all the awfulness of its Mystery, is one of the commonest occurrences of everyday life, we are fain to cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" It occurs to us at once that if men and women are, ordinarily speaking, to be called to this life of appalling sanctity; if they are destined to set before the world an earthly picture of Christ and His Church; if they are called to this life of complete sacrifice; then surely they should be bending the whole energy of their life to prepare themselves for the exceeding solemnity of the life that is set before them. But this, alas! is just what, as a rule, they fail to do; and surely the unhappy marriages that are the cause of the vile horrors of the Divorce Court may largely, if not wholly, be traced to the want of due preparation for Holy Matrimony. Men rightly shrink from rushing unprepared to Communion; it does not occur to them that Marriage needs the same sort of preparation as Communion. And yet the Church is careful

to teach us this when it says that it is "convenient," i.e. fitting, that the newly married should receive Communion either at their Marriage, or at the first opportunity after it.

Now the preparation for Holy Marriage may be divided into (*a*) remote, and (*b*) immediate preparation. The "remote" preparation for Marriage is that the man and the woman should be *habitually* living in a state of Grace. This is obvious; for who can represent Christ and His Church if they are habitually living in sin? Marriage is one of what are technically called the "Sacraments of the living"; that is to say that it presupposes a state of Grace. The benediction of the Church on Holy Marriage conveys the special Grace that is needful for that holy estate. We cannot seek a special Grace if at the moment we are in unforgiven, because unrepented, sin. If men and women have, up to the time of their Marriage, been content simply to "live their life," and "have a good time," how do they imagine that they can suddenly turn round and represent the mutual sacrifice of Christ and His Church? No wonder that so many marriages turn out so

badly. If men and women have any idea that they are called to Holy Marriage, let them at once begin to practise the life of sacrifice and self-surrender. This constitutes the remote preparation.

The immediate preparation will be like the immediate preparation for Communion, viz., self-examination, contrition, and, if necessary, Confession. But it also comprises a steady outlook into the new home, and a clear and definite purpose for that home. If there is one thing more than another that the Church needs it is Christian Homes. We cannot help or prevent the evil in the world outside; but, in the truest sense of the words, "an Englishman's house is his castle"; and within the home he is paramount and supreme. The home of the newly married is, and must be, *exactly what they choose to make it.* Can anything be imagined more full of the brightest hope than the entry of the man and his wife upon their new home? It is not for nothing that the Church has ordained that the first words that strike upon the ear of the newly married should be the glorious Psalm of Christ and His Church, "Blessed are all they

that fear the Lord and walk in His ways, etc., etc.," with its lovely cadence, "O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be." The home of the newly married is a very Sanctuary of GOD, where moment by moment is found the living picture of Christ and His Church. What a vocation! Is it not indeed worth while to have lived to come to this?

And, yet once again, we remind ourselves that this is so simply in what we may call the ordinary natural ways of the Kingdom of GOD. It is so, not because men have decreed that it shall be so, or because it has been elaborately planned and thought out, but, just because Marriage is what it is by the direct ordinance of GOD. But, *corruptio optimi pessima*, and man can mar and destroy though he cannot create. Alas for the glory of Marriage, when men rush in and take it in hand in their own way!

Let those then that are called to the Holy Estate of Matrimony remember what Marriage is, and fear as they enter, in the lovingkindness and Providence of GOD, into the bright cloud of that excelling Mystery.

CONCLUSION

WE have tried to trace the Mystery of Holy Marriage back, from its institution in the time of man's innocency, to its source in the Inner Life of GOD; and we have then seen how the solution of so-called "difficulties" in relation to Marriage, and the mutual relation of husband and wife, spring directly out of the fact that the Mystery of Marriage has its beginning in the Inner Life of GOD Himself.

Two thoughts suggest themselves here by way of practical conclusion.

(1) It is the Christian Religion alone that steadily faces facts. The children of this world start, as they must do, with the phenomenon of Creation. But, as we have seen, it is impossible to deal with a phenomenon without reference to that of which it is the phenomenon. Unless men can go behind the phenomenon of

Creation they had better leave it alone; because, apart from the Fact of which Creation is but the manifestation, men have to fall back upon theories: and theories cannot constitute a solid foundation on which to rear a whole superstructure. The Christian Religion is the only thing that can deal rightly with Creation, because it alone can go behind Creation to that of which it is a manifestation. So, when we come to think of Holy Marriage, which is the excelling Mystery of Creation, we have not a chance of dealing rightly with it unless we know That out of which it springs, and of which it again is the Manifestation. It is a melancholy spectacle to see men floundering about in their theories about Marriage. They are bound to be wrong, because they are not facing facts: and it is not until they are converted, and become as little children, that they will be able to grasp the simplicity of the Truth. The first practical conclusion then that we draw from our considerations on the Mystery of Marriage is that we proclaim from the house-tops that the Christian Religion is the sole perfect truth, because it is the one and only thing that really faces facts.

(2) Out of this first practical conclusion springs immediately the second, viz., that it is only in the Christian life that we can escape from being hopeless failures in the Creation of GOD. This is so because it is of the essence of the Christian Life that we walk by Faith and not by sight. And what a light this fact throws upon the appalling solemnity of everyday life in the Creation of GOD! We live, and move, and have our being, in Him. Heaven is as familiar to us as earth; for, in our life in Christ, we face the facts of the case and see things solely in the relation in which they stand to GOD. The everyday life of regenerate humanity is as wonderful as the walking of St. Peter on the water. How wonderful it is to think of that last step off the ladder on to the water. By all the laws of merely natural life it meant the inevitable plunge into the depths of the sea. But he was facing facts; and the fact was that the One Who was standing erect on the surface of the water had said "Come"; and, on the strength of that fact he went, and was able to go. So is life when once men are delivered from the darkness and blindness of fallen nature, and catch the

vision of Creation as one solid whole standing over against the uncreated Unity of GOD. They can deal with the phenomenon because they have reached the Cause; they understand the manifestation because they know What it manifests. So the everyday manifestation of the apparently commonplace fact of Marriage leads on straight up to the Inner Life of GOD: and in that everyday occurrence of life in this world we see, if we have eyes to see, JESUS Christ; and, seeing Him, we fall at His Feet as dead.

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